down the peak over and above the existence of a spring on the top. This will solve the water problem. Sir, I can understand the answer given by the Chief Engineer that the question has been engaging the serious attention of Government and now the question is allowed to lie over on account of the financial stringency. That shows, Sir, that Government is anxious to go into the problem and solve it. In view of this answer given on behalf of the Government I do not press the motion.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Does the House agree to allow Mr. S. J. Nair to withdraw his motion ?

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*) : We object.

The question whether Mr. S. J. Nair could withdraw his motion was put to the vote of the House and lost.

The resolution was then put to the vote of the House and was lost.

CONTRACTS FOR GOVERNMENT WORKS.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : Sir, I beg to move the following resolution :

"This Assembly recommends to the Government that, wherever possible, Travancoreans be engaged for working Government contracts under the P. W. D. and other departments."

Well, Sir, in point of education, ability, merit, capacity and experience in all branches of life Travancoreans stand second to none. There are able contractors, experienced contractors and monied contractors in Travancore who can do any sort of work that is given tothem. But we find in the P. W. D. that an enormous amount of money is expended on original works as well as on other items of works in the State. But big works and paying works are being given to outside contractors, that is, some sort of preference is shown to outsiders in the matter of giving contracts. Even though a local contractor would quote the lowest in the tender, an outsider is preferred invariably. Generally, the work executed by outsiders is far below the average in the matter of quality than that executed by a native. Sir, I can point out instances of this. The work in connection with the Jagathy bridge at Trivandrum was given to an European contractor in spite of the fact that there were several Travancoreans prepared to take it up for lower amounts. Sir, it is just a small bridge over a small river ; and it took about 3 years for completion. On a former occasion to a question put by me to the Chief Engineer, P. W. D., in connection with this, he answered that the Jagathy bridge was completed. But unfortunately even now the road is closed and the work either for the bridge or for the road on both ends of the bridge is still going on.

MR. K. M KRISHNAN (*Ambalapuzha II*) : Is it not due to the fault of the Water Works Department ?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : It may be due to the fault of either Department. But the road is closed. On the other hand, a contract to build a bridge across the Vamanapuram river was given to a Travancore contractor. It was constructed in 5 months' time ; and the Chief Engineer told me that in the history of the Public Works Department that bridge stood first in the matter of speedy and beautiful execution.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT : I wish to say that advertisement of a particular individual before this House is not permitted.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : I never mentioned any individual Sir. I only made mention of an instance to show the superior ability of our contractors and not to differentiate the local contractors one from another. That is not my idea, Sir. Again, Sir, I might say that much money is being expended and if the contracts are given to Travancoreans when there are able and experienced contractors in our country it will be beneficial to the interests of the State and its subjects. In this connection I may also say that in the Forest Department ——

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : I am not prepared to allow that. That is not relevant to the discussion.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : Sir, my resolution reads : " Travancoreans be engaged for working Government contracts under the P. W. D. and other departments ".

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : All right, you can refer to other departments but not in detail

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : Sir, in the Forest Deyartment also for felling and selling timber, contracts are being given to outsiders, and much money is being made by outsiders from this. This is done in spite of the fact that many Travancoreans have submitted tenders quoting the lowest rates. Sir, I know at the time these tenders were opened the department purposely refused to accept the tenders so far as Travancoreans are concerned. Many persons from outside come to our country and make plenty of money due to the favour shown to them by the Head of the Forest Department Sir, I say that is a sort of injustice so far as the interests of Travancoreans are concerned.

Travancoreans know well that these timbers if given to them on contract can be removed and sold in the proper market. But purposely, the head of the department refuses to accept their tender. He has got some petty prejudice towards the Travancore contractors and he purposely extends his unjust patronage to outside contractors.

With regard to the Excise Department, there are contracts for tobacco, salt, opium, ganja and other articles. In this department I would request Government to see that the contracts for tobacco, opium and other foreign articles are given to Travancoreans.

RAO SAHIB MAHAKAVI S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*) : Are private contracts engaged for these things ?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : My point is that all the ariticles for which contract is given, should be taken from Travancore contractors. It would be conducive to the interests of Travancore, to the progress of various industries here, to the good of the people and to the saving of a large sum of money in Travancore, if the contracts in all these departments are given to the Travancore contractors alone. This ought to be the practice, wherever Travancore contractors are coming forward. With these few words I move this resolution for the kind acceptance of this House.

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DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Anybody seconding ?

MR. K.R.ELENKATH (*Kalkulam I*): In seconding the resolution, I beg to state that wherever possible it is absolutely necessary that Travancoreans should be preferred. There has been a tendency in recent times to give small contracts to outsiders even though the tenders given by Travancoreans are below that given by other contractors. In all cases Government should as far as possible prefer Travancoreans. But wherever technical knowledge may be required, where there will not be technicians from Travancore to look after a particular work and where big investments may be necessary, in such cases, Government may give the contract to some outsider.

MR. PACODE A. NARAYANA PILLAI (*Vilavankod*) : I have very great pleasure in supporting the resolution so ably moved by the honourable member Mr. S. J. Nair. I hope there will be no difficulty on the part of Government also to accept the principle underlying this resolution. Sir, recently our Government have issued a communique, regarding the stores purchases, and that goes to show that, as far as possible, Travancore goods should be given preference. Sir, it is the same principle that underlies Mr. S. J. Nair's resolution. It is a question of economics and finance also, and thereby we are only encouraging our own businessmen. Of course, there will be very little of our money flowing out and to that extent the possibility of impoverishing the country is also avoided. These are the important factors involved in this question. So, Sir, I support the resolution.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : The Government member.....

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*) : Sir,.....

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : I have already invited the Government member.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : No, Sir, let him speak.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : Yes. I called upon the Government member and he does not want to speak now. Therefore I evade.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): If it is left to the will and pleasure of the speaker..... .....

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : It is not a matter of will and pleasure, but it is a matter of convenience. I take an indulgent view and permitted him to speak after.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*) : It is a long time since this cry was made that all contracts must as far as possible be given to Travancoreans. I am not concerned with that wide question. What I am concerned with is to bring to the notice of Government the great injustice that has been done as a result of an order by the Chief Engineer and probably by some of the Executive Engineers. Sir, the manufacture of tiles is an industry which is now being carried on, on a large scale by a large number of Travancoreans. Enormous capital has been invested in the establishment and working of the tile factories. At Quilon, the manufacture of tile is a very important industry. For a very long time, Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield were preserving the monopoly of this industry. Anybody might

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[Mr. Puthupalli S. Krishna Pilla.]

try and enter the field of competition and he who is able to produce the best tiles will be able to command the market. At the same time the State owes a duty to the small capitalists who are trying in the best manner possible to bring up this industry.

Let us see what the P. W. Department has done. In the year 1111, I remember to have read a notice in which it is stated that there are four recognised tile manufacturers from where tiles may be purchased by P. W. D. contractors. It was also stated in the notification that Government themselves would purchase only from any one of those four manufacturers, whenever any purchase had to be made. Sir, if you take into consideration the encurmous sum of money spent every year by the P W. D. in the construction of buildings, you will find that a pretty good portion of it goes for the purchase of tiles. If there were four tile manufacturers in the year 1111, whose tiles were recognised as of proper quality which could be gone in for by Government, I do not understand why in 1112 three companies have gone out? In 1112, Government have recognised only one make of tile and that is the product of Messrs Harrisons and Crosfield. What is it that induced the Chief Engineer to decry all tiles manufactured in the other companies? If I put the question straight to him, he will say that they are all bad tiles.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads Buildings and Irrigation*): Yes.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): If they are not of the same quality as the tiles of the three manufacturers recognised in 1111, I can accept my statement to be incorrect. But I can produce documents before Government showing that for the purpose of unnecessarily decrying, unnecessarily putting down native industry, they have stated, "your tiles are not good. We are getting tiles of a better quality." Seeing as a matter of fact, that one type is not better than the other I submit that this is thoroughly unjustifiable. Why should Government money go into the pockets of only one concern? Are our tiles worse than the tiles manufactured by European Companies. No. Our tiles are as much in demand as the H. & C. tiles. Tile to tile they are of equal if not of better quality. Anyway it was so in 1111. What has happened to the mud that Thomas Stephen and Company, or the A. D. S. Company or the Alwaye Company has been using? What is wrong with the clay that was purchased by them? Has anything gone wrong with the pug mill or with the grinding machine? What is it that has gone wrong in the year 1112? Why do Government now say that they want tiles manufactured by Harrisons and Crosfield alone. Thousands of tiles manufactured by our manufacturing concerns are being used for the construction of Government buildings by the Maramath Department.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*): Are private individuals preferring Harrisons and Crosfield tiles?

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MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): It depends upon individual convenience. Anyway there is no preference.

I am speaking about the purchase of tiles by Government. I understand that it was ordered and published that all tiles supplied to the Public Works Department either by contractors or by Government, would be tiles belonging to Messrs Harrisons and Crosfield. In the notification it is stated that no other tile would be accepted.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know whether the member is aware that the tiles we get from Harrisons and Crosfield for Rs. 40 is the same in quality as that which we get from other companies for Rs. 25 or 30?

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Certainly. I know the Government themselves, in 1110, were ordering these tiles and were satisfied that their quality was good enough. I cannot understand how the quality could have deteriorated now. I can understand the Chief Engineer giving an opportunity to every firm in the country, and then choosing the cheapest one consistent with quality.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Is the honourable member aware that not only in the matter of tiles, but in the matter of even surki, the monopoly has been given to Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield?

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Yes.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Mr S. J. Nair is supplying information and not asking for it.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): I did not want to go into details; that was why I did not advert to the facts now referred to by Mr. S. J. Nair.

Further, Sir, while the Chief Engineer has ordered that for all Government buildings only the articles manufactured by Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield can be used, the Maramat Engineer is buying tiles and other materials from Indian manufacturers. He seems to be satisfied with their quality. One cannot understand how materials which are considered quite good by one officer of the Engineering Department are not considered to be good enough by another officer of the same department.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Is it not the Maramat Engineer that is in charge of the construction of even the Palaces?

MR. PUTHUPLLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Yes. Sir, there seems to be something behind all these. I admit that it may not always be possible for the Government to look into these details. The Chief Engineer is expected to treat all people alike and to bear in mind that local industry deserves as much encouragement as industries carried on by anybody else. With these words, I support the resolution.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I should like to reply Mr. Puthupalli Krishna Pillai exactly as he concluded, namely, that the Chief Engineer has always been and *is* treating all people alike in the matter of tiles as in every other matter.

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[Mr. G. B. E. Truscott.]

In regard to the question of tiles, over which the honourable member got hot, quotations were asked for this year as was done last year; and the firm that tendered the lowest quotation was asked to supply tiles during the year. There is no idea of any preference at all. That is the answer I have to give to Mr. Puthupalli Krishna Pillai.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Was it not clear to the Chief Engineer that Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield had quoted an unduly low rate this year to shut out competition for all time to come?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I do not know that, and I am not concerned with that. As the head of the Department, it is my duty to get for the Government the best material for the cheapest price; and I have got it. I invited quotations, and gave the order to the firm that quoted lowest, consistent with quality. I do not see why because that firm happened to be Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield, because it happened to bear a foreign name, because it happened to be a European firm working in Quilon and employing Travancore labour, I should boycott it.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Was it not possible to distribute the order to the various factories that manufacture tile? Even if Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield or some other firm had given him the lowest tender, he could have again consulted the other firms and negotiated with them for still lower rates, as he has done in other contracts.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): That is not my idea of contract. I do not think I am here to go bargaining with the various firms that send me quotations.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): Were tenders called for for 1111?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): Yes.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): Am I to understand that this year, in respect of all kinds of tiles, Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfields have quoted lowest?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): They did quote lowest. All the tenders that I have received are open to examination by everyone of the honourable members of this House. But Sir, to say that I have to go round, to every one who has furnished me with a tender, and to bargain with them is an idea which is against my ideas of transacting business, or even of fairplay.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*): Did the Chief Engineer for a moment consider the question why Messrs. Harrisons and Crosfield, who have been, for forty years, consistently quoting by far the highest rates, have now quoted the lowest rates?

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MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : Why they have done so is not the concern of the Chief Engineer. His only concern is that the Government must get the best article at the cheapest rate. I hope the House will bear me out in that.

Are there any more questions, Sir.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*) : I submit Sir, that the member should not invite questions like that.

MR. KAYALAM PARAMESVARAN PILLAI (*Additional Head Sirkar Vakil*) : I would like to ask a question, Sir. Are not Travancore raw material and Travancore labour used in the manufacture of Harrisons and Crosfield tiles ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : They are.

MR. PUTHUPALLI S. KRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon II*) : May I ask whether Travancore capital has gone in for the industry ?

DEPUTY PRESIDENT : That question does not arise since the resolution speaks only of Travancoreans and not of Travancore capital.

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): As regards contracts, Sir, wherever possible contracts *are* given only to Travancoreans. That is the policy of the department; and it has always been the policy. The few cases where contracts were given to outsiders were those where it was impossible or impracticable for any of the local contractors to carry out the work by reason of their not being used to such work, work which requires special technical knowledge and special experience.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : Is the Chief Engineer aware that, in the P. W. D. Workshop, the contract for the supply of plumbago powder was given to a foreigner although there were lower tenders from local contractors ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*) : That has been the subject-matter of an interpellation, and has been answered fully.

Regarding the Jagadi Bridge, the mover of the resolution said that it was started years ago and has not been finished yet. The bridge was completed about the middle of last June. The work now going on there has nothing whatsoever to do with the P. W. D. or with the contractors for the building of the bridge.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*) : Is the road now open for vehicle traffic ?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings, and Irrigation*) : I said nothing about the road. The mover of the resolution was talking about the Jagadi Bridge and said that, although the contract was given to an outside firm the work had not been completed yet; I say the work was completed and the bridge tested last June. The work now being carried on there has nothing whatsoever to do with the P. W. D. ; it is the Water Works Department that is doing it.

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RAO SAHIB MAHAKAVI S. PARAMESVARA AIYAR (*Nominated*): Is the construction of the road on either side of the bridge, which I find is the work now being carried on there, being carried on by the Water Works Department or by the Engineering Department?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): The Water Works Department have to lay the pipes before the road construction is taken up.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum—Rural*): Is that the explanation why the contract was given to an outsider?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): There is no contractor in Travancore yet who has had any experience in moulding and driving reinforced concrete piles. That is the only reason why the contract was given to an outsider. Now, actually, I am having a pile-driver made in the Workshop and there is an experienced, and qualified Supervisor who has been doing nothing else for some time past but to watch the moulding and the driving of concrete piles, so that, shortly, it is hoped that we ourselves will do such kind of work, and would not have to go in for outside contractors. I may mention that there is a contract which was given to a local contractor. I am not going to mention his name or the name of the work, in which very little progress has been made although it is now many months since the contract was given. I may also say, Sir, that if you take into account the P. W. D. contracts on the whole, the proportion that goes to the outsider is really very very small. Government and the Department prefer insiders; and the nature of the works in Travancore makes that the only method practicable and convenient. I would like to point out that the construction of the Council Chamber—a big work in recent years—has been entrusted to a local contractor.

MR. A. THANU PILLAI (*Trivandrum-Rural*): Am I to understand that, whenever reinforced concrete piles have to be driven, foreigners will have to be engaged?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): I was explaining a few minutes ago that I now have a Pile Driver, in the Workshop, and a qualified Supervisor doing nothing else but watching and studying that work, so that, hereafter, we would be able to do the work ourselves.

MR. K. KUNJUKRISHNA PILLAI (*Quilon I*): Do the Government accept the policy that, other things being equal, Travancoreans will be preferred in the matter of contracts?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): That *is* the policy of the Department.

MR. N. E. VARUGHESE (*Tiruvalla I*): May I know whether cheapness alone will weigh with the Government in these matters?

MR. G. B. E. TRUSCOTT (*Chief Engineer, Roads, Buildings and Irrigation*): Consistent with quality.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*) I wish to add a few words.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Before that, I want to clear the position. One honourable member referred to the purchase of tiles from Messrs. Harrisons & Crosfield, and the Chief Engineer said, in the course of his reply, that he could not be expected to accord an unfair treatment to

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that firm alone because they happened to be Europeans. The resolution says that in the matter of P. W. D. and other contracts Travancoreans should be preferred to outsiders; and the mover of the resolution referred to other departments also. There is therefore absolutely no question of European *vs.* Indian. I want to remove that misapprehension.

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): Sir, the mover of the resolution referred to the Excise Department as one of the departments falling within the ambit of the resolution. He referred to the contracts for the supply of tobacco, opium and ganja. As Mr. Parameswara Aiyar stated, no contract is given by Government for the supply of tobacco, opium and ganja. Therefore my department cannot do anything in the matter.

But I may mention for the information of the member that there are some other contracts such as the transport of salt, the contract for the distillation and supply of arrack and the contract for the supply of articles of uniform. These are the only contracts given by the Excise Department and I may say that in respect of these contracts very few Travancoreans are coming forward. For the transport of salt, during all the five years that I have been the head of the department, only one Travancorean submitted a tender. His rates were accepted. Wherever possible, without detriment to Government interests, we are accepting the tenders of Travancoreans. More than that it is not possible to do. In regard to the supply of uniform articles some minor articles alone are being tendered for by Travancoreans. In respect of the manufacture and supply of arrack from our distilleries no tender has been submitted by any Travancorean so far.

That is all that my department can do. I may assure the House, that so far as the Excise Department is concerned it has been trying all along to encourage Travancoreans.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): May I know whether the tender for the supply of coco-brandy was advertised?

MR. C. O. MADHAVAN (*Excise Commissioner*): All tenders are advertised in the *Gazette* as well as in the daily papers in Travancore and outside.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: It is almost time and if the mover is pressing the resolution I have to put it to the vote of the House.

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Sir, my idea in bringing forward this resolution.....

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: Are you pressing it?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): I may be allowed to explain my position, Sir.

DEPUTY PRESIDENT: The time has already expired. Are you pressing it to a division?

MR. S. J. NAIR (*Nedumangad*): Yes, Sir.

The resolution was put to the vote of the House and carried.

The Assembly adjourned at 5. 5. P. M. *sine die*.

P. PARAMESVARAN PILLAI,
Secretary to the Sri Mulam Assembly.

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